7. (Amended) A method for producing optically active α-hydroxycarboxylic acid, which comprises hydrolyzing optically active cyanohydrin, using at most 10 equivalents of mineral acid selected from hydrochloric acid, sulfuric acid, boracic acid, phosphoric acid and perchloric acid relative to said optically active cyanohydrin under the condition that maximum temperature when reacting is 90°C or less.

Please add the following new claims 14-19:

14. (New) The method for producing α-hydroxycarboxylic acid according to Claim 1, wherein said hydrocarbon solvent is chain hydrocarbon or cyclic hydrocarbon.

15. (New) The method for producing α-hydroxycarboxylic acid according to Claim 1, wherein said hydrocarbon solvent is aromatic hydrocarbon.

16. (New) The method for producing α-hydroxycarboxylic acid according to Claim 1, wherein said hydrocarbon solvent is benzene, toluene, or xylene.

17. (New) A method for producing α-hydroxycarboxylic acid, which comprises hydrolyzing optically active cyanohydrin in the presence of a hydrocarbon solvent, using at most 10 equivalents of mineral acid selected from hydrochloric acid, sulfuric acid, boracic acid, phosphoric acid, and perchloric acid relative to said optically active cyanohydrin under the condition that maximum temperature when reacting is 90°C or less.

18. (New) A method for producing optically active crystalline α-hydroxycarboxylic acid, which comprises hydrolyzing optically active cyanohydrin, using at most 10 equivalents of mineral acid selected from hydrochloric acid, sulfuric acid, boracic acid, phosphoric acid, and perchloric acid relative to said optically active cyanohydrin under the condition that maximum

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